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ABSTRACT

To explore the subjective dimensions of public relations practitioner orientations toward their profession in the context of the organizational roles they play, this study combined characteristics of both large-sample survey research and indepth, intensive inquiry. Membership lists of the Public Relations Society of America, the International Association of Business Communicators, the Public Relations Club of San Diego, and Women in Communications were used to survey public relations practitioners in the San Diego, California, area by mail. From the 172 respondents, 28 subjects were selected for intensive study. Analysis of the findings identified four public relations practitioner types: the upwardly mobile practitioner, the creative artistic practitioner, the committed proactive practitioner, and the literary scientific practitioner. Individuals of the upwardly mobile type expressed positive opinions about their profession and fellow practitioners. They viewed themselves as sensitive supervisors who practiced good public relations and moved up the organizational ladder. The creative artistic type wanted more say in decisions, but not at the expense of the spontaneity and emotional involvement in the public relations process. The committed proactive practitioner felt that public relations was more than just a technique and saw a need for improvement in the profession. Finally, the literary scientific type also felt that the profession should be evaluated, but held no special regard for the organization nor saw ethics as particularly relevant to the practice of public relations. They regarded public relations as an applied social science. (HOD)

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SUBJECTIVE DIMENSIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL ROLES AMONG PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTITIONERS

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Pressures from within the profession itself and from the work environment are changing the tasks and roles public relations practitioners perform.[1] These changing roles, defined by objective behavior of practitioners, have been the focus of several studies.[2] These studies, however, have focused on the self-reported acts of practitioners, with only cursory attention to the implicit feelings and attitudes of practitioners who perform those acts.[3] The purpose of this study is to explore the subjective dimensions of practitioner orientations toward their profession in the context of organizational roles they play. Using intensive techniques of Q-methodology to study small numbers of practitioners in depth, this study generates empirically-grounded hypotheses for further exploration through large sample designs.

Katz and Kahn provide a useful theoretical framework for discussing relations between organizational roles and belief systems of people who play those roles.[4] The basic element of organizational role is the act, specific activities that occur within and are relevant to the organization. Roles are abstractions of acts, the persistent features of recurring actions that yield predictable outcomes. Several organizational roles may be performed by the holder of an organizational office, the position occupied by the individual within the network of other organizational members. Katz and Kahn give primacy to the concept of organizational role, arguing that an organization is a system of roles.[5]

The role of public relations practitioners within organizations occupies a central place in current discussions of the stature of the profession. In 1981, the Task Force on the Stature

and Role of Public Relations reported an analysis of the public relations profession, suggesting a number of corrective actions that practitioners can take.[6] Most significant to this study, the Task Force found practitioners shifting away from communication production activities and toward organizational problem solving. At the same time, executive public relations positions were often awarded to managers from outside public relations. The Task Force noted that management wants practitioners to measure accomplishment of goals and objectives within public relations. At the heart of these multiple concerns is the role that public relations practitioners play in organizations.

Organizational Roles of Public Relations Practitioners

Both experimental and large, cross-sectional studies have been conducted of roles played by practitioners in organizations.[7] These studies define roles along the theoretical lines of Katz and Kahn:[8]

1. Roles are abstracted from a number of organizational activities (acts) that recur frequently in the work day of the practitioner.
2. Any given practitioner can perform a number of organizational roles within the office of public relations practitioner.

These studies have resulted in identification of four discrete organizational roles played by practitioners.[9] These roles are:

Communication Manager Role -- In this role, the practitioner is expert in public relations problem solving. A systematic planner, the practitioner makes communication policy decisions, and is held

accountable for PR success or failure. The practitioner in this role keeps senior management informed of public reactions to actions of the organization.

Communication Technician Role -- In this role, the practitioner is immersed in the production of communication: brochures, pamphlets, photography, graphics. Writing is a dominant activity. Practitioners in this role do not make policy decisions; they simply implement decisions made by others.

Media Relations Specialist Role -- In this role, the practitioner specializes in relations with the mass media. Media contact and placement is emphasized, as well as informing management within the organization of media coverage of the organization.

Communication Liaison Role -- In this role, practitioners play a high-level advisory role in problem solving and decision making. The practitioner outlines alternative approaches to solving public relations problems, but does not make policy decisions directly. The practitioner serves as communication liaison between top management and priority publics, creating opportunities for each to hear the views of the other. Environmental monitoring typifies this practitioner role.

As indicated, each practitioner can play several of the roles outlined above in the course of a workday. However, each practitioner can be typified by his or her dominant role, the role played with relatively greater frequency than all the other roles.[10]

The Taking of Practitioner Roles

In order to relate implicit beliefs of practitioners toward PR to the roles they play in organizations, Katz and Kahn's theoretical model requires further explanation. The practitioner may be viewed as positioned at the focus of numerous forces directing their organizational behavior and defining their organizational roles. People close to the practitioner in the organizational structure and in the daily work flow are role senders: people who signal the

practitioner of their expectations, and reward or punish behavior of the practitioner in terms of those expectations. Though many organizational members are role senders, senior management reigns paramount. The public relations practitioner engages in role taking, the internalization of the expectations of others, expressed in his or her explicit organizational behavior. This model of practitioner role taking is displayed in Figure 1. The practitioner's explicit organizational behavior serves as "feedback" in the system, which in turn impacts the role sending of others within the organization.

A number of organizational factors serve as initial input to the open system of role sending and role taking. Many such factors of course are specific and idiosyncratic to individual organizations. Nonetheless, certain generic factors should be considered in regard to public relations roles. These include:[11]

1. Accountability. Public relations is currently being drawn into a "management by objectives" framework in many organizations. In this framework, the practitioner must demonstrate organizational payoff for resources spent on public relations efforts. Practitioners are expected to set measureable goals and evaluate effectiveness in reaching those goals.

2. Technical/Managerial Transformation. Public relations activities are shifting from purely technical production of communications to a problem-solving approach, where communication is viewed as one of several resources or tools to solve public relations problems.

These factors aren't comprehensive. Other generic factors may well be at play. However, these factors do provide a basis for role conflict between the practitioner's internalized belief

Figure 1.

Factors Involved in the Taking of Public Relations Practitioner Roles*

*Adapted from Daniel Katz and Robert Kahn, The Social Psychology of Organizations (New York: Wiley and Sons. 1966). P. 187.

system and changing role sendings from within the organization.

The focus of this study is exploration of the part that belief systems play in the role taking behavior of practitioners. As indicated in Figure 1, the belief system and other attributes of the practitioner condition the perception of role sendings. Second, belief system characteristics affect the way in which the practitioner responds behaviorally to those role sendings. Finally, these characteristics of the practitioner affect the way in which role senders interpret the behavior of the practitioner in the "feedback" loop of the cycle.

Research Questions

What are the belief systems of different types of practitioners regarding their profession and their perceived roles in organizations? What are the relations between these subjective belief systems and the objective behavior of practitioners playing roles in organizations?

The first research question suggests that the belief systems of practitioners regarding their profession can be empirically categorized into a parsimonious typology. Because attitudes and belief systems are both complex and difficult to measure, methods were used which involved the intensive study of a relatively small number of practitioners. While such an approach limits the generalization of findings in a statistical sense to the larger practitioner population, the method reduces the dangers of premature closure and vulgar operationalization of complex and

subtle characteristics of practitioners. The present study, then, is considered an initial step in an ongoing stream of related study.

The second research question cannot be satisfactorily answered in the present intensive design. Rather, the goal here is to generate empirically the relevant hypotheses for more rigorous test in a large-sample, hypothetico-deductive design. Once a typology of subjective attitudes and beliefs is established, tentative linkage between subjective types and objective behavior can be established.

Method

The present study combined characteristics of both large-sample survey research and in-depth, intensive inquiry in what can be termed an embedded Q-study. An embedded Q-study involves the use of Q-sorting data collection techniques among a sub-sample of respondents to a larger mailed survey. This approach, while uncommon, offers several important advantages.[12] The initial mailed survey, involving 172 completed questionnaires, probed organizational roles played by practitioners, using a 24-item battery of organizational activities to measure the four organizational roles.[13] Using scores on each of the four role scales, a subset of respondents was selected for intensive, in-depth study.

Subjects selected scored high on one role scale only, with relatively low scores on the other three role scales. Such respondents are what Brown refers to as theoretically saturated, as manifesting an important characteristic relevant to the research question.[14]

Because face-to-face exchange is very important in Q-sort data collection, subjects in both the mailed survey and the Q-method study were practitioners in San Diego, California. Membership lists of the Public Relations Society of America, the International Association of Business Communicators, the Public Relations Club of San Diego, and Women in Communications were used to survey practitioners by mail. From the 172 respondents, 28 subjects were selected for intensive study, based on their dominant organizational role scores. Q-sort interviews ranged from 30 minutes to 1½ hours. Any comments made by subjects during the sorting process were recorded.

Subjects were instructed to sort 60 statements of attitude or opinion about public relations on an 11-point scale. The actual format is displayed in Figure 2. Subjects were asked to sort each item according to how the item described their own personal attitudes toward public relations or their current jobs. A forced distribution was used, meaning a set number of statements were to be placed in each "pile" on the 11-point scale.

The Q Statements

The power of Q-methodology is the ability to measure an individual's subjective attitudes and beliefs in a very comprehensive way. In a Q-study of this format, there are some 50,000 unique ways to sort the opinion statements into the 11 piles on the attitude scale. Each completed Q-sort is the practitioner's detailed model of his or her attitudes toward the focal issue of the study. If the Q-sort itself is viewed as the subject's

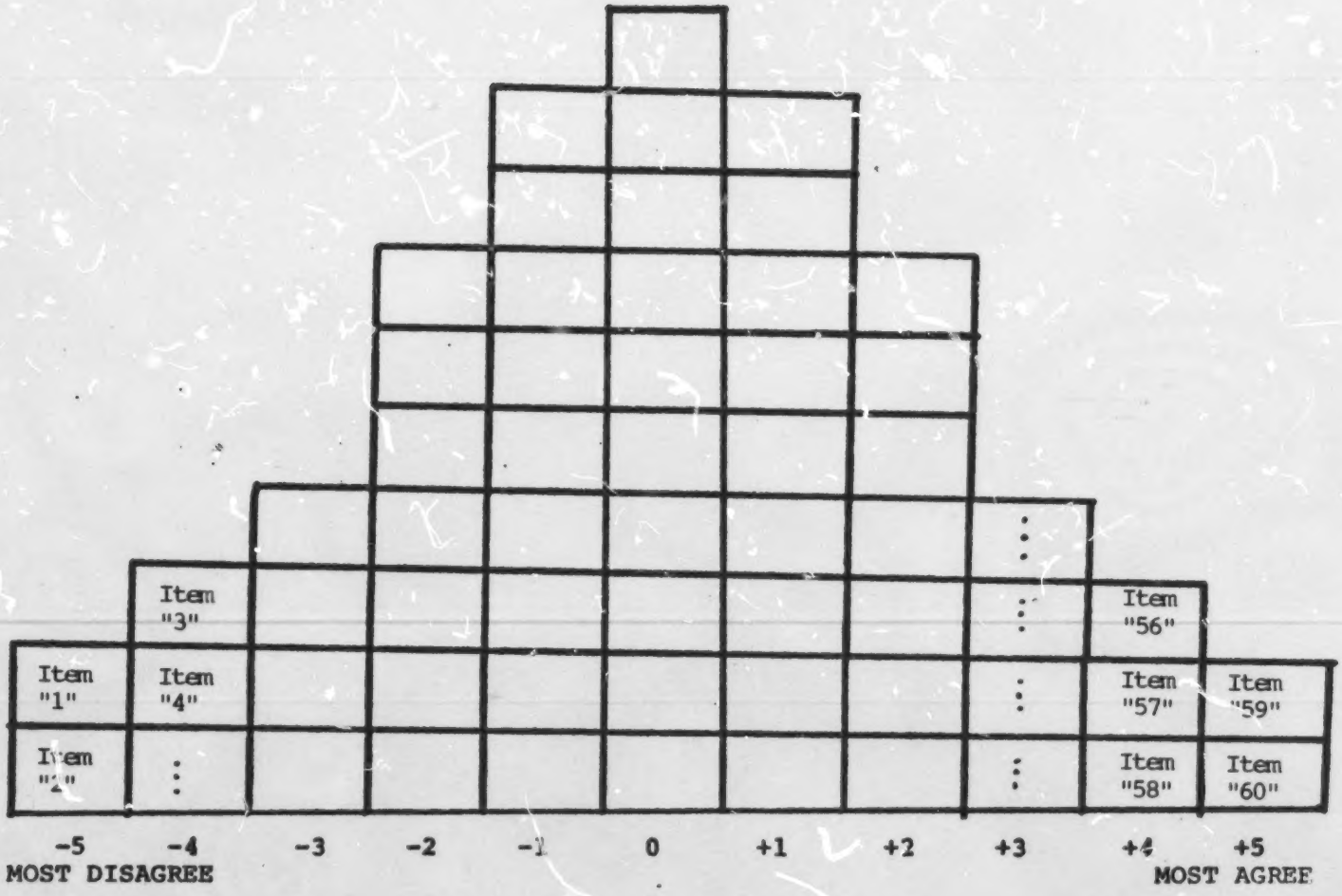

Figure 2.

Forced Distribution for the Q-Sort

mosaic of his or her belief system, then the opinion statements themselves are the tiles from which the mosaic is constructed. Because of the high number of possible sorts, the choice of any one statement for inclusion in the Q-set is not critical. As with mosaics, the goal is to provide the subject with a variety of statements, relevant to the research question, that captures the range of possible attitudes.

The statements used in the present study were obtained from public relations practitioners and public relations educators through depth interviews. Statements were also obtained through review of literature relevant to areas of inquiry. Statements were selected at three levels of analysis: physiological, organizational and cultural. Within each level of analysis, a balanced number of items were selected so that half represented one major point of view at that level and the other half represented the opposing view. The structure of the Q-set is displayed in Figure 3. The actual statements, with "pile" scores for each factor, appear in Appendix A.

At the physiological level, great interest has been generated by the concept of left-brain and right-brain dominance. Discovered through study of adults who suffered severe injury to the right and left sides of the brain, some researchers have concluded that the left side of the brain tends to specialize in analytic, sequential and logical thinking. The right side, on the other hand, is oriented to spatial, holistic, simultaneous thought. This physiological discovery has led social scientists to explore the possibility that some people are "stronger" or "more dominant"

Figure 3.

Statement Selection for Q-Sort

I. Physiological Level

A. Left-Brain Dominance: 13, 14, 19, 32, 37, 41, 48, 50, 51, 53

B. Right-Brain Dominance: 3, 5, 7, 12, 20, 21, 22, 24, 42, 45

II. Organizational Level

A. Managerial: 4, 11, 17, 28, 30, 33, 39, 58, 59, 60

B. Technical: 1, 2, 6, 25, 43, 44, 47, 54, 55, 57

III. Cultural Level

A. Scientific: 8, 9, 10, 15, 31, 34, 35, 36, 38, 40

B. Literary: 16, 18, 23, 26, 27, 29, 46, 49, 52, 56

in the left hemisphere of the brain, while others are right-brain dominated.[15] Indeed, a number of studies have been conducted to see if certain "brain types" self-select professions in which their left-brain or right-brain dominance is put to best or most preferred use.[16] As public relations moves from a profession where creative creation of communications is the predominant activity to a profession where analytic problem solving and sequential programming are dominant, one might suspect role stress or role conflict among right-brain dominated practitioners. The present study does not shed light on the ongoing debate surrounding brain-dominance research, nor do the Q-statements measure directly the brain dominance of participating practitioners. Rather, the brain dominance items provide a dimension along which practitioners can describe their beliefs and attitudes toward public relations.

On the organizational level, public relations literature is replete with discussions of public relations as a staff or managerial function.[17] While the conventional wisdom suggests that the practitioner evolves from staff responsibilities to managerial duties through career development,[18] some research indicates that practitioners may self-select enduring technical staff roles rather than take on managerial roles.[19] Managerial-staff distinctions within public relations provide another dimension along which practitioners can describe their attitudes toward public relations.

On the cultural level, items were selected according to C. P. Snow's two identified cultures in western societies.[20] Snow's scientific culture is typified by sympathy for technical solutions to problems. Snow's literary culture, on the other

hand, represents a reaction to modern, technical society. Such a cultural orientation fosters a love for things past, a passion for literature, and a deep distrust of technical solutions to problems.

Of the 60 statements, 20 were selected because of their relevance to the brain dominance question. Ten stated opinions consistent with a right-brain view of the public relations profession. Ten included opinions consistent with a left-brain view of public relations. Twenty statements were selected for their relevance to the management-staff distinctions in public relations. Ten favored a staff orientation to public relations; ten favored a managerial view of the profession. Twenty statements were selected for their orientation to the two cultures of Snow's typology. Ten stated a literary view of public relations, while the remaining stated a scientific view of public relations.

In the final analysis, the statements by themselves are of little interest. Rather, the models of underlying belief systems that practitioners fashion from those statements provide genuine opportunities for discovery of empirically-grounded hypotheses.

The 28 Q-sorts completed by practitioners were Q-factor analyzed. Principal factors were extracted and rotated to a varimax solution.[21]

Results

Q-sort responses of the 28 practitioners emerged as four types, accounting for 51.8 percent of the total variance. The factor solution provided the most parsimonious typology without heavy cross-factor loadings. The four practitioner types were identified as the upwardly mobile practitioner, the creative artistic practitioner, the committed proactive practitioner and the literary scientific practitioner.

The Upwardly Mobile Practitioner

Ten of the 28 practitioners in the study belonged to this practitioner type, though three of the respondents also had high factor loadings on other factors.

Practitioners in this type ranged in age from 23 to 44 and included equal numbers of men and women. Their employers included public relations agencies, educational institutions, nonprofit organizations and the government. The group averaged six years in professional public relations experience. Most identified themselves as "middle management," with salaries ranging from $23,000 to $30,000.

Q-sorts completed by these practitioners reflected an interest in managerial opportunities rather than technical aspects of public relations. Self-confident, these practitioners expressed positive opinions about their profession and fellow practitioners. They view public relations as planned and programmatic, relying on sound maxims of the profession. They equate creativity with challenge but not with artistic

notions rooted in spontaneity. They don't view themselves as frustrated artists nor do they view upward mobility as a "trade-off" with creative aspects of public relations.

Items which upwardly mobile practitioners agreed with more strongly than did other types of practitioners included:[22]

45.	Disclosure is always the better policy than covering up.	+5
17.	Practitioners who know "how" will always have jobs; those who know "why" will always be their bosses.	+5
42.	While I look to management to provide informal feedback on the work I am doing, I generally "know" when I've done a good job.	+4
7.	The public relations practitioner's gift to the organization is the ability to discover new relations while everyone else is thinking in a linear, mechanical way.	+3
34.	Public relations is evolving into an increasingly specialized field; many practitioners are evolving into managers.	+3
37.	The orientation of doing PR without objectives simply doesn't work.	+3

The upwardly mobile practitioner strikes a balance between holistic and intuitive characteristics of "right-brain" domination and the analytic, sequential characteristics of "left-brain" domination.

Items which the upwardly mobile practitioner disagreed with more strongly than did other practitioners included:

55.	One of the most enjoyable tasks of public relations is organizing and giving company and plant tours.	-5
2.	To climb the corporate ladder, the PR practitioner has to give up a lot.	-4

48. As boss, I am pushy, aggressive, persistent. My subordinates must be polite, tactful and responsive. -4

54. PR isn't a profession yet because it hasn't developed standard rules of practice. -4

29. I would really prefer to be a freelance writer, but I can't afford it. -3

Attitudes toward tour guiding may reflect recency of responsibility in that area. Both upwardly mobile and creative artistic practitioners roundly reject any pleasure in that task. Other practitioners, perhaps higher in the organizational structure, only slightly disagree with that statement (55). The upwardly mobile practitioner is not a novelist-in-closet. The practitioners in this type view themselves as sensitive supervisors who will practice good public relations (more or less by the book) and move up the organizational ladder.

The Creative Artistic Practitioner

Six practitioners in the study belonged to this practitioner type, though one of the six was negatively correlated with the factor. (He felt the same issues were important, but disagreed with everyone else in the group about those issues.)

Practitioners in this type ranged in age from 27 to 41 years, included both men and women with an average of five years of public relations experience, and included incomes ranging from $18,000 to $33,000. These practitioners worked for public relations agencies, industrial manufacturers and a consumer services company. Practitioners in this group described themselves as staff, middle management and top

management without discernable pattern.

Q-sorts of practitioners in this type indicated a strong distrust of management's ability to appreciate public relations and a similar distrust of moving themselves into managerial positions. These practitioners want more say in decisions, but not at the expense of the sponteneity and emotional involvement in the public relations process. Practitioners in this type reject a scientific approach to public relations and criticism that public relations is absorbed in technique.

Items which the creative artistic practitioners agreed with more strongly than other practitioners included:

46.	Creativity is a very important aspect of public relations; PR will suffer under a strict scientific approach.	+5
43.	I look to self satisfaction rather than management strokes in evaluating my work	+5
24.	I operate on a humanistic, spontaneous level; I don't operate on an academic, theoretical level.	+4
5.	If we don't bring our emotions to our work, public relations ends up being something less than what it should be.	+4
47.	Management has virtually no idea what the PR function is all about.	+2
29.	I would really prefer to be a freelance writer but I can't afford it.	+2

Items which the creative artistic practitioner disagreed with more strongly than did other practitioners included:

19.	Some practitioners talk about "creativity" in PR out of defense; they have never done anything in an orderly, systematic way.	-5
33.	Unfortunately, most PR practitioners are	-4

communication technicians. They see their skills beginning and ending with journalistic skills.

36. The smaller the budget of the PR unit, the more important it becomes to do research. -4

35. Unfortunately, most PR practitioners have no idea what the impact is of their communication strategies. -4

4. Some people see moving into management as giving up creativity, but management is the most creative game around. -3

The creative artistic practitioner is characterized by an abiding desire to pursue the creative, spontaneous and humanistic aspects of public relations practice. The measurement and evaluation of public relations impact through scientific methods are rejected.

The Committed Proactive Practitioner

Eight practitioners studied belong to the committed proactive practitioner type. Of those, five were positively correlated, while three were negatively correlated with the factor. This indicates high relevance of a common subset of items, but substantial disagreement in attitudes toward those items.

Practitioners positively correlated with this factor ranged in age from 39 to 59, with an average age of 48 years. All practitioners positively correlated were men with an average of 14 years of public relations experience. Four classified themselves as holding top management positions while the fifth classified himself as middle management. Their average income

is $41,000. These practitioners work for public relations agencies, a utility company, an educational institution and the government.

Two men and one woman were negatively correlated with the committed proactive practitioner factor. Ranging from 24 to 39 years, these practitioners described themselves as holding either top or middle management positions. Averaging five years of public relations experience, these practitioners earn an average annual income of $26,000. They work for public relations agencies and a consumer services company.

Q-sorts for practitioners positively correlated with the committed proactive practitioner factor indicate a high level of commitment to the practitioner's organization and an ethical view of the public relations profession. These practitioners feel that public relations is more than just technique, and see a need for improvement in the profession, especially as it relates to research methods and evaluation. These practitioners equate creativity with managerial challenge, rejecting a more artistic definition of creativity. These practitioners roundly reject the "reactive" characteristics of some approaches to public relations.

Items which committed proactive practitioners agree with more strongly than do other practitioners include:

50.	PR practitioners should rise above a preoccupation with technique.	+5
56.	As a PR practitioner, I need to work for a cause or organization I really believe in and feel good about.	+5

33. Unfortunately, most PR practitioners are communication technicians. They see their skills beginning and ending with journalistic skills. +3

49. The reputation of PR will improve as the profession adheres to a strict code of ethics. +3

35. Unfortunately, most PR practitioners have no idea what the impact is of their communication strategies. +2

Items which committed proactive practitioners disagreed with more strongly than did other practitioners included:

6. I like coping with crisis; my attention span is too short to put up with "planned" or "programmatic" PR. -5

1. I'm frankly scared by all the new things that are expected of modern PR practitioners. I don't know how to do all those things. -5

20. The truly great practitioner is generally creative, original, moody, idealistic. -4

60. My mission is to tackle the guy who hates our guts, rather than talk to the people who pat our backs. -2

24. I operate on a humanistic, spontaneous level; I don't operate on an academic, theoretical level. -2

The committed proactive practitioner is confident in his skills to meet new demands on practitioners, and believes the profession must upgrade in both evaluative skills and ethical standards.

The Literary Scientific Practitioner

Four of the 28 practitioners studied belong to this practitioner type. Equally divided by sex, the literary scientific practitioners ranged from 33 to 48 years in age. With

an average of 12 years of public relations experience, salaries ranged from $17,000 to 45,000, with a mean of $28,000. These practitioners worked for public relations agencies, a nonprofit organization and a utility company.

Q-sorts of the literary scientific practitioner indicate a close "fit" with attitudes one might expect of Robinson's public relations practitioner as applied social scientist. At the same time, these practitioners hold roots in the liberal arts and regret the passing of literature from the education of new practitioners. Nonetheless, they are committed to the belief that public relations activities can and should be evaluated, viewing themselves as applied social engineers. Unlike the committed proactive practitioner, the literary scientific practitioner holds no special regard for the organization nor sees ethics as particularly relevant to the practice of public relations.

Items which the literary scientific practitioners agreed with more strongly than did other practitioners included:

4.	Some people see moving into management as giving up creativity. But management is the most creative game around.	+5
13.	PR is best approached as a rational process that breaks down into a series of logical steps.	+5
26.	I feel my roots are deep in the liberal arts orientation or tradition.	+4
16.	I find it embarrassing how few new practitioners have ever read the masters of communication: Shakespeare, Hemingway, the great writers.	+2

19.	Some practitioners talk about 'creativity" in PR out of defense; they have never done anything in an orderly, systematic way.	+1

Items which the literary scientific practitioners disagreed with more than did other practitioners include:

49.	The reputation of public relations will improve as the profession adheres to a strict code of ethics.	-5
45.	Disclosure is always the better policy than covering up.	-4
50.	PR practitioners should rise above a preoccupation with technique.	-3
25.	When budget cuts are made, the PR unit is the first to go.	-3
56.	As a PR practitioner, I need to work for a cause or organization I really believe in and feel good about.	-2
46.	Creativity is a very important aspect of public relations; PR will suffer under a strict scientific approach.	-1

The literary scientific practitioner, while viewing himself or herself as rooted in the liberal and literary arts, regards public relations as an applied social science and practitioners as enginneers in the application of that science.

Post Hoc Analysis

The four types of public relations pracitioners explicated above constitute an empirically-generated typology of practitioners, grounded in their implicit belief systems about their profession. What relations exists between organizational roles, as defined by objective behavior (acts) of practitioners, and

subjective belief systems of practitioners regarding their profession? Because the types are generated by the intensive study of a few practitioners, rather than tested in hypothetico-deductive form from explicit, a priori types in a large sample, hypotheses are not provided here. Rather, relations between organizational roles and subjective belief systems are analyzed to discover empirically-grounded hypotheses for subsequent study.

Practitioner factor loadings on each of the four practitioner type factors were correlated with the four organizational role scores derived from 24 objective activities measured on a seven-point Likert type scale. The results of this analysis are provided in Table 1.

As indicated, upwardly mobile factor loadings exhibit modest positive correlations with communication manager, communication technician and communication liaison role scores. No relation exists between the upwardly mobile practitioner and media relations specialist role scores. Given the relative youth and "middle management" clustering of practitioners of this type, this set of beliefs about public relations may be associated with practitioners in transition, who play many roles in their organizations.

The creative artistic factor loadings are moderately negatively correlated with the communication manager role scores. Creative artistic practitioners are highly and positively correlated with the communication technician organizational role. (Statistical significance at $p<.001$ is established,

Table 1.

Correlation of Practitioner Types and Organizational Roles*

	Comm. Mgr. Role Scores	Comm. Tech. Role Scores	Media Relat. Role Scores	Comm. Liaison Role Scores
Upwardly Mobile Type Factor Loadings	.16 NS	.14 NS	-.01 NS	.13 NS
Creative Artistic Type Factor Loading	-.23 NS	.62 p<.10	.05 NS	.15 NS
Committed Proactive Type Factor Loadings	.28 p<.10	-.08 NS	-.22 NS	.40 p<.10
Literary Scientific Type Factor Loadings	.02 NS	-.05 NS	.00 NS	.10 NS

*Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were computed. Because of the sample size (N=28), relations were considered "significant" at the 90% level of confidence. In a larger sense, relations were not tested but explored. Hypotheses generated from these relations require test in a large-sample survey.

despite the small sample size.) A modest, positive correlation exists between creative artistic practitioners and the communication liaison role.

The committed proactive factor loadings manifest a moderately strong correlation between the communication manager and communication liaison role scores. Committed proactive practitioners are likely to play both communication manager and communication liaison roles in organizations.

The literary scientific factor loadings are not strongly correlated with any organizational role scores, among the 28 practitioners studied. A slight positive relation exists between literary scientific practitioners and the communication liaison role.

Discussion

Four types of practitioners, who hold differing subjective belief systems about the public relations profession, emerged empirically from analysis of an intensive array of data. From among the 60 items that practitioners sorted along an 11-point agree/disagree scale, a small subset of statements can be extracted because of their ability to discriminate underlying attitudes and beliefs that identify factor types. These discriminating items provide empirically-grounded scales for measuring practitioner types in large sample survey designs.[23]

While all four practitioner types are of interest, depending on the research question, two practitioner types emerge from this study as relevant to issues of role sending and

role taking. First, a powerful relationship exists between the creative artistic practitioner and the communication technician organizational role. Specifically, the creative artistic practitioner prefers the spontaneous, intuitive, and creative aspects of the public relations process. This preference is manifest in organizational role playing that stresses production of communication and immersion in the techniques of communication development. While creative artistic practitioners in this study described themselves as holding middle and top management positions in their organizations -- as well as staff positions -- they appear to avoid the activities associated with the managerial role. The creative artistic practitioner wants more say in organizational decisions, but is distrustful of changes implied by climbing the organizational ladder to decision-making levels.

This finding has important implications for professional development of practitioners. Druck and Hiebert, in Your Personal Guidebook To Help You Chart a More Successful Career in Public Relations, presume that practitioners evolve out of the communication technician role as they gain more professional experience.[24] An earlier report of organizational role playing provides evidence that communication technicians and communication managers do not differ significantly in age or years of professional experience.[25] This study provides strong evidence that creative artistic practitioners are self-selecting the communication technician role as a relatively permanent career choice.

This selection of the technical role by creative artistic

practitioners has important implications, in turn, for their own personal job satisfaction and the stature of the profession. Much of the current literature in public relations has idealized the practitioner as manager and problem solver.[26] Indeed, redefining public relations as a managerial function has been viewed by many as a prime method of improving the stature of the profession.[27]

Yet many practitioners of a creative or artistic bent are selecting a different career path. Forced change of their chosen career path may take away the very characteristics of their public relations jobs that attracted them to the profession in the first place. While some might favor such a purge, there is some reason to believe that public relations benefits from its pluralism -- from committed proactive practitioners as well as creative artistic practitioners. Robinson's seminal work on public relations' transition from "seat of the pants" to "scientific" professional practice provides no place for such pluralism.[28] An alternative view of the evolution of the profession would stress "balance" or "integration" of both creative artistic and committed proactive practitioners within an organization's or agency's public relations unit. Within one-practitioner shops, that "balance" or "integration" would need to occur within a single practitioner, through multiple role playing within the office of public relations practitioner.

The emergence of committed proactive and literary scientific practitioners -- and the relation of these types to organizational

roles -- holds additional implications for Robinson's model of the public relations practitioner. Robinson argued that public relations holds a relation to the social sciences similar to that of medicine and engineering to biology and the physical sciences.[29] The public relations practitioner is an applied social scientist, an engineer of knowledge-level, attitude and behavioral change among priority publics.[30] In examining the 60-item sorts of committed proactive practitioners and literary scientific practitioners, Robinson's model most closely resembles the literary scientific practitioner type. Yet the literary scientific factor loadings show no correlation with managerial role playing. Rather, committed proactive practitioners tend to play managerial and high-level managerial advisory roles. While the committed proactive practitioner exhibits some characteristics of Robinson's social engineer, this type differs in important ways from the literary scientific practitioner. First, the committed proactive practitioner is committed to his or her organization and to the ethics of the public relations profession. The literary scientific practitioner is not. The committed proactive practitioner balances proactive planning with creativity, feeling that purely "scientific" public relations would suffer.

This supports the argument posed by Mintzberg concerning planning and management, on the one hand, and brain dominance on the other.[31] Mintzberg argues that managers operate in an environment that favors the holistic, relational characteristics of the right hemisphere of the human brain. Planning, which might be

regarded an a high-level advisory role to managing an organization, favors the logical, sequential, analytic characteristics of the left hemisphere of the brain.[32] Robinson's description of the practitioner as applied social scientist incorporates many of the logical, sequential characteristics of the left hemisphere. Interestingly, the literary scientific practitioner factor loadings correlated exclusively -- but weakly -- with the communication liaison organizational role, where the practitioner advises and plans for the manager who actually makes decisions. The committed proactive practitioner, on the other hand, more closely resembles Mintzberg's holistic, relational, right-brained manager:[33]

> "The manager is involved, plugged in; his mode of operating is relational, simultaneous, experiential, that is, encompassing all the characteristics of the right hemisphere."

Evidence in this study is suggestive of the need for balance and integration of the particular attributes of the creative artistic and committed proactive practitioner, both within individual practitioners themselves and among the different offices within the public relations unit.

Findings of this study are the starting point for several avenues of inquiry. First, how satisfied are creative artistic practitioners with their jobs? Both organizational environment and role sending would constitute major intervening variables. Second, what aspects of the committed proactive practitioner are left out of the Druck and Hiebert[34] and Robinson's model[35] of the emerging managerial public relations practitioner?

Notes

[1]Scott Cutlip and Allen Center, Effective Public Relations, fifth edition (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1978), p. 14-15.

[2]See, for example, Glen M. Broom and George D. Smith, "Testing the Practitioner's Impact on Clients," Public Relations Review 5 (Fall 1979), pp. 47-59; Glen M. Broom, "A Comparison of Roles Played by Men and Women in Public Relations," paper presented to the Public Relations Division, Association for Education in Journalism Annual Convention, Boston, Mass., August 12, 1980; and David M. Dozier, "The Diffusion of Evaluation Methods Among Public Relations Practitioners," paper presented to the Public Relations Division, Association for Education in Journalism Annual Convention, East Lansing, Michigan, August 9, 1981.

[3]The studies of organizational roles of practitioners have focused on practitioner self-reports of objective behavior. While some data were collected on such subjective variables as job satisfaction and perceptions of organizational roles, these data were of an extensive nature.

[4]Daniel Katz and Robert L. Kahn, The Social Psychology of Organizations (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1966).

[5]Ibid, p. 172.

[6]Philip Lesly, "The Stature and Role of Public Relations," Public Relations Journal 37 (January 1981), pp. 14-17.

[7]See Note 2 above. The Broom and Smith study was an experiment in practitioner role taking. Students in a large public relations course were provided assistance from consultants in completing a case study. The roles played by the consultants were manipulated as the experimental intervention. In the Broom study, 458 respondents drawn from the membership list of the Public Relations Society of America were asked to describe how frequently they performed 24 discrete public relations activities, using a seven-point scale ranging from "never" to "always." Dozier's study used the same 24 behavioral items in a study of San Diego practitioners.

[8]Katz and Kahn, op. cit., pp. 171-186.

[9]Data from Broom's study of PRSA members were subjected to factor analysis. The four roles described are a condensation of the factor analysis and interpretation. See Dozier's study in Note 2.

[10]Dominant organizational role is operationally defined as the role score for a given respondent that is larger, when converted to a normalized Z-score, in comparison to all three other role scores. The dominant role is the set of activities that a practitioner performs in his or her organization with greater relative frequency, when compared to other practitioners.

[11]These major factors are described by Lesly in the report of the Task Force. See Note 6. Others have also noted these changes in public relations. See Paul M. Lewis, "Public Relations -- An Applied Social Science," Public Relations Journal 30 (April 1974), pp. 22-24; Larry Marshall, "The New Breed of PR Executive," Public Relations Journal 36 (July 1979), p. 10.

[12]Q-methodology is an intensive method of inquiry that runs counter to the large-sample, hypothetico-deductive norms of communication research. Q-methodologists, for their part, often use the method exclusively, without exploring options for interfacing Q-methodological outputs with the inputs for large-sample, hypothetico-deductive research. Such interfacing increases the efficiency of hypothetico-deductive research by generating grounded hypotheses for test, as opposed to the purely deductive approach to hypotheses construction favored by hypothetico-deductive types. Deductive hypotheses are no better than the overarching theories from which they are deduced. Given the theoretical maturity of communication research, such an exclusive approach to hypotheses generation can rightfully be regarded as inefficient.

[13]The items measuring roles are from Broom. See Note 7 and Note 9.

[14]Steven R. Brown, Political Subjectivity: Applications of Q Methodology in Political Science (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), p. 260.

[15]Sally P. Springer and Georg Deutsch, Left Brain, Right Brain (San Francisco, California: W. H. Freeman, 1981).

[16]Bonnie A. Vannatta, "Hemisphericity and Journalism -- How Do Journalists Think?" Newspaper Research Journal 3 (October 1981), pp. 9-15.

[17]Cutlip and Center, op. cit., pp. 44-51.

[18]Kalman B. Druck and Ray E. Hiebert, Your Personal Guidebook To Help You Chart a More Successful Career in Public Relations (New York: Public Relations Society of America, 1979), pp. 9-21.

[19]David M. Dozier, "Program Evaluation and Roles of Practitioners," unpublished manuscript, Department of Journalism, San Diego State University, San Diego, California.

[20]C. P. Snow, The Two Cultures and a Second Look (London: Cambridge University Press, 1959).

[21]The QUANAL computer program package, which provides special advantages for Q-factor analysis, was used to generate three-factor, four-factor, five-factor, six-factor and seven-factor solutions. The four-factor solution was deemed most useful, in that it provided a parsimonious typology with a minimum of cross-factor loading of respondents. See Norman Van Tubergen, QUANAL User's Guide, second edition, revised (Lexington, Kentucky: N. Van Tubergen, University of Kentucky, 1980).

[22]All items displayed in the explanation of factors are discriminating items, items which have typal Z-scores one or more standard deviations different from all other combined practitioners in the study. The Z-score is converted to a pile score and displayed to the right of the item statement. Pile scores range from a +5 (strongly agree) to 0 (neutral) to -5 (strongly disagree). For each factor, positive discriminating items are displayed first, followed by negative discriminating items.

[23]Discriminating items are very useful, because they are items which best identify factor types, from the array of 60 items initially provided. A small number of discriminating items can then be converted to Likert-type scales and used in large-sample surveys. Such items are superior to deduced scales, because they have been empirically identified as tapping a relevant dimension of attitudes that distinguishes some types of respondents from other types of respondents.

[24]Druck and Hiebert, op. cit.

[25]Dozier, "Program Evaluation and Roles of Practitioners," p. 25.

[26]Edward J. Robinson, Public Relations and Survey Research (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1969).

[27]Lewis, op. cit.

[28]Robinson, op. cit.

[29]Ibid., pp. 12-15.

[30]Ibid., p. 5.

[31]Henry Mintzberg, "Planning on the Left Side and Managing on the Right Side," Harvard Business Review (July-August 1976), pp. 50-58.

[32]Ibid, p. 50.

[33]Ibid, p. 55.

APPENDIX A

The appendix contains the 60 statements used in the Q-sort. The selection category code in the second column indicates the a priori category to which the statement was originally assigned. Those categories are as follows:

I. Brain Dominance Typology (physiological level)

- A. Left-Brain Dominance
- B. Right-Brain Dominance

II. Organizational Role Typology (organizational level)

- A. Managerial Organizational Role
- B. Technical Organizational Role

III. C. P. Snow's "Two Cultures" Typology (cultural level)

- A. Scientific Cultural Orientation
- B. Literary Cultural Orientation

The four columns to the right of the statements provide pile scores (-5 to 0 to +5) for the 11-point agree/disagree scale used in the Q-sort. These pile scores are converted from the Z-scores provided through data analysis. The pile score is given for each statement for each of the four factors. The factor typology is as follows:

F1	(factor one)	The Upwardly Mobile Practitioner
F2	(factor two)	The Creative Artistic Practitioner
F3	(factor three)	The Committed Proactive Practitioner
F4	(factor four)	The Literary Scientific Practitioner

Item Number	Selection Catagory	Description	F1	F2	F3	F4
1	IIB	I'm frankly scared by all the new things that are expected of modern PR practitioners. I don't know how to do all those things.	-5	-2	-5	-1
2	IIB	To climb the corporate ladder, the PR practitioner has to give up a lot.	-4	0	-3	+1
3	IB	Practitioners who "plan" PR must be oblivious to the fact that most PR problems are irregular, discontinuous, unsystematic.	-3	-2	-1	0
4	IIA	Some people see moving into management as giving up creativity. But management is the most creative game around.	+1	-3	+1	+5
5	IB	If we don't bring our emotions to our work, PR ends up being something less than what it should be.	-1	+4	-1	+2
6	IIB	I like coping with crisis; my attention span is too short to put up with "planned" or "programmatic" PR.	-3	+1	-5	-2
7	IB	The PR practitioner's gift to the organization is the ability to discover new relations while everyone else is thinking in a linear, mechanical way.	+3	+2	0	-1
8	IIIA	Until practitioners stop acting like a bunch of frustrated artists, nobody in management will take us seriously.	0	-1	+2	0
9	IIIA	The PR practitioner is an applied social scientist.	+2	0	+2	0
10	IIIA	The PR practitioner is an engineer of public opinion, knowledge levels and behavior.	+1	0	+2	+3
11	IIA	Writing a good news release starts with knowing the programmatic, operational goals and objectives that motivate the news release.	+3	-1	0	+3
12	IB	Writing a good news release starts with a creative flash of insight that will spark the imagination of the reader.	+1	0	-3	-2
13	IA	PR is best approached as a rational process that breaks down into a series of logical, sequential steps.	+4	-1	0	+5
14	IA	A fatal weakness of most practitioners is that they don't treat public relations as logical and sequential.	0	-1	0	+3
15	IIIA	I find it embarrassing how unscientific most PR practitioners are about their work.	-1	-3	+1	+1
16	IIIB	I find it embarrassing how few new practitioners have ever read the masters of communication: Shakespeare, Hemingway, the great writers.	-1	-2	-1	+2
17	IIA	Practitioners who know "how" will always find jobs; those who know "why" will always be their bosses.	+5	-1	+1	+1
18	IIIB	The idea of "measuring" and quantifying PR is alien to everything I consider PR to be.	-2	-1	-4	-2

Item Number	Selection Catagory	Description	F1	F2	F3	F4
19	IA	Some practitioners talk about "creativity" in PR out of defense; they have never done anything in an orderly, systematic way.	0	-5	0	+1
20	IB	The truly great practitioner is generally creative, original, moody, idealistic.	-1	0	-4	-1
21	IB	Creativity and challenge are very important in public relations.	+1	+3	+4	+2
22	IB	The modern approach to PR emphasizes the feature and the soft sell.	0	+2	-2	-1
23	IIIB	My organization puts its own unmeasured value on good public relations; I've never been asked to give a numerical evaluation of our PR program.	-1	+1	0	0
24	IB	I operate on a humanistic, spontaneous level; I don't operate on some academic, theoretical level.	-1	+4	-2	+1
25	IIB	When budget cuts are made, the PR unit is the first to go.	-1	+1	0	-3
26	IIIB	I feel my roots are deep in the liberal arts orientation or tradition.	-2	+1	+1	+4
27	IIIB	I think PR is getting more humanistic; establishing relationships has become more important.	+4	+3	+1	0
28	IIA	I think that PR practitioners should be in top management positions; I want to have more input into major decisions.	+2	+3	+4	+1
29	IIIB	I would really prefer to be a freelance writer, but I can't afford it.	-3	+2	-2	0
30	IIA	PR practitioners should be trained and retrained in Management By Objectives.	+2	+1	0	+4
31	IIIA	Practitioners need to learn that evaluation involves a comparison of where you are now versus where you started. We need to learn research methods.	+1	+1	+3	+3
32	IA	A real weakness of most practitioners is that they don't know how to write objectives and develop plans based on those objectives.	+1	-1	+2	0
33	IIA	Unfortunately, most PR practitioners are communication technicians. They see their skills beginning and ending with journalistic skills.	-1	-4	+3	0
34	IIIA	PR is evolving into an increasingly specialized field; many practitioners are evolving into managers.	+3	+2	+1	-1
35	IIIA	Unfortunately, most PR practitioners have no idea what the impact is of their communication strategies.	-1	-4	+2	+1
36	IIIA	The smaller the budget of the PR unit, the more important it becomes to do research.	0	-4	-1	+1
37	IA	The orientation of doing PR without objectives simply doesn't work.	+3	+1	+2	+2
38	IIIA	In most communication strategies, the typical PR practitioner has no objectives in mind, no clearly defined target audience and nothing really specific in mind.	-3	-2	0	-1

Item Number	Selection Catagory	Desciption	F1	F2	F3	F4
39	IIA	The low reputation of public relations is due directly to the lack of planned, systematic, goal directed activity by the typical PR practitioner.	0	-2	-1	0
40	IIIA	If you want to justify your existence in PR, you must be prepared to quantify your results.	+2	-2	-1	+2
41	IA	Practitioners need an increasing knowledge of business practices in order to integrate more fully into the organization.	+2	+4	+4	0
42	IB	While I look to management to provide informal feedback on the job I'm doing, I generally "know" when I've done a good job.	+4	0	+2	+1
43	IIB	I look to self satisfaction rather than management strokes in evaluating my work.	0	+5	+1	-1
44	IIB	I am not "bottom line" oriented.	-2	0	-4	-5
45	IB	Disclosure is always the better policy than covering up.	+5	0	-1	-4
46	IIIB	Creativity is a very important aspect of public relations; PR will suffer under a strict scientific approach.	+1	+5	0	-1
47	IIB	Management has virtually no idea what the PR function is all about.	-2	+2	-2	-4
48	IA	As boss, I'm pushy, aggressive persistent. My subordinates must be polite, tactful, and responsive.	-4	-1	-3	-2
49	IIIB	The reputation of PR will improve as the profession adheres to a strict code of ethics.	+1	+1	+3	-5
50	IA	PR practitioners should rise above a preoccupation with technique.	0	+1	+5	-3
51	IA	Too many PR practitioners are pompous incompetents.	-2	0	-3	-3
52	IIIB	What we need in PR is a back-to-basics movement.	0	-1	-2	+2
53	IA	PR practitioners are navigators. They tell you where you are, where you're going and when you'll get there. But not blindfolded!	0	-3	+1	-4
54	IIB	PR isn't a profession yet because it hasn't developed standard rules of practice.	-4	-2	-1	-1
55	IIB	One of the most enjoyable tasks of PR is organizing and giving company and plant tours.	-5	-5	-1	-2
56	IIIB	As a PR practitioner, I need to work for a cause or organization that I really believe in and feel good about.	+2	+3	+5	-2
57	IIB	Everything I do has to be approved by my boss.	-2	-3	-1	-2
58	IIA	I'm ready to play a larger managerial role in planning and executing our PR program; unfortunately, management doesn't give me that opportunity.	-2	0	-2	-3
59	IIA	"Reaction"is merely putting out fires; "action" keeps them from starting.	+1	+2	+3	+2
60	IIA	My mission is to tackle the guy who hates our guts, rather than just talk to people who pat our backs.	+2	+2	-2	+4